

§ 958.7 Hearing location.

An oral hearing under this part shall be held:

- (a) In the judicial district of the United States in which the respondent resides or transacts business;
- (b) In the judicial district of the United States in which the incident or incidents occurred upon which the determination of liability under 39 U.S.C. 3018 was made by the Determining Official; or
- (c) In such other place as may be determined by the Presiding Officer.

§ 958.8 Rights of parties.

Subject to the sound discretion of the Presiding Officer, acting under § 958.9, parties to a hearing under this part shall have the right:

- (a) To be accompanied, represented, and advised, by an attorney or representative of his or her own choosing;
- (b) To participate in any conferences held by the Presiding Officer;
- (c) To agree to stipulations of fact or law, which shall be made part of the record;
- (d) To make opening and closing statements at the oral hearing;
- (e) To present oral and documentary evidence relevant to the issues;
- (f) To submit rebuttal evidence;
- (g) To conduct such cross-examination as may be required for a full and true disclosure of the facts; and
- (h) To submit written briefs, proposed findings of fact, and proposed conclusions of law.

§ 958.9 Responsibilities and authority of presiding officer.

(a) The Presiding Officer shall conduct a fair and impartial hearing, avoid unnecessary delay, maintain order, and assure that a record of the proceeding is made.

(b) The Presiding Officer's authority includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- (1) Establishing, upon adequate notice to all parties, the date and time of the oral hearing, if any, as well as, in accordance with § 958.7, selecting the hearing site;
- (2) Holding conferences, by telephone or in person, to identify or simplify the issues, or to consider other matters

that may aid in the expeditious resolution of the proceeding;

(3) Continuing or recessing the hearing in whole or in part for a reasonable period of time;

(4) Administering oaths and affirmations to witnesses;

(5) Ruling on all offers, motions, requests by the parties, and other procedural matters;

(6) Issuing any notices, orders, or memoranda to the parties concerning the proceedings;

(7) Regulating the scope and timing of discovery;

(8) Regulating the course of the hearing and the conduct of the parties and their representatives;

(9) Examining witnesses;

(10) Receiving, ruling on, excluding, or limiting evidence in order to assure that relevant, reliable and probative evidence is elicited on the issues in dispute, but irrelevant, immaterial or repetitious evidence is excluded;

(11) Deciding cases, upon motion of a party, in whole or in part by summary judgment where there is no disputed issue of material fact;

(12) Establishing the record in the case; and

(13) Issuing a written Initial Decision containing findings of fact, conclusions of law, and determinations with respect to whether civil penalties, clean-up costs and/or damages for mailing hazardous materials and/or related violations under 39 U.S.C. 3018 should be imposed, and if so, the amounts thereof, after taking into account the penalty considerations contained in 39 U.S.C. 3018(e).

§ 958.10 Prehearing conferences.

(a) At a reasonable time after issuing the Notice of Docketing and Hearing, and with adequate notice to the parties, the Presiding Officer may conduct, in person or by telephone, one or more prehearing conferences to discuss the following:

(1) Simplification of the issues;

(2) The necessity or desirability of amendments to the pleadings, including the need for a more definite statement;

(3) Stipulations or admissions of fact or as to the contents and authenticity of documents;